

New York: Neal-Schuman Publishers, Inc., 2011. 345p. alk. paper, \$250 (ISBN 9781555707019). LC2011-000445.

Compiled by three academic librarians, *Digital Collections Worldwide* provides an exhaustive and valuable annotated listing of the world's most authoritative and comprehensive digital collections. The authors describe over 1,400 digital collections and include an extensive subject index. The Internet is full of digital collections that allow users to easily access information quickly, but it can be challenging and time consuming to sift through multiple links generated by a search engine such as Google. *Digital Collections Worldwide* is designed to help the user identify which digital collections are best for their needs. The authors accomplish this by organizing the book in a logical and succinct way. For example, the directory only includes digital collections from the following established organizations: governmental body, library, archives, educational institution, museum, corporation, or a scholar's personal Web site. In addition, the book will never be outdated because the authors maintain a companion Web site that updates broken links and incorporates new collections.

The book is organized into eight chapters, each accompanied by annotations. These annotations provide information regarding what has been digitized (including photographs, documents, maps, illustrations, artifacts, audiovisual items, and so on), as well as the name of the host institution and its most current URL for the collection. The purpose of each annotation is to document why a collection is online, what the collection includes, who is responsible for the collection (both the physical and digital), and tips on the best way to explore the collection online. The annotations also include excellent information about topics such as copyright. One of the more valuable aspects of this directory is that non-English sites are included. The authors carefully selected foreign language sites that include digital collections that are easy to translate using

one of the many free online translating resources, and they state in the annotations if there are any language restrictions for collections.

Chapter 1, "World Initiatives," introduces the audience to collections on Web sites that represent broad subjects and geographical contexts that encompass the entire globe or multiple countries. The remaining seven chapters are arranged alphabetically by the seven continents and, within each chapter, alphabetically by country. Each chapter helpfully includes an introduction to the continent by providing useful facts and figures, as well as information about digitization practices and available technology resources.

Even though the primary audience for *Digital Collections Worldwide* is skilled researchers, a layperson can benefit from this directory. The book is described as "an unprecedented advancement in scholarship and research, enabling a high school student in Kenya to view the Dead Sea Scrolls in the exact same detail as a full professor at Oxford." Those who work in a library, archive, museum, cultural or educational institution, etc. will benefit greatly from this directory by expanding their knowledge about digital collections but also will be able to provide inquisitive customers with an invaluable resource to begin their exploration of digital collections around the world.—*Katie Nash, Elon University.*

**S. David Mash.** *Decision-Making in the Absence of Certainty: A Study in the Context of Technology and the Construction of the 21st Century Academic Library.* Chicago: ACRL (ACRL Publications in Librarianship, no. 63), 2010. 160p. alk. paper, \$38 (ISBN 9780838985717). LC2010-049544.

*Decision-Making in the Absence of Certainty* explores the interplay of dynamic variables involved in the decision-making process of five American universities that constructed new multimillion-dollar library facilities between 2006 and 2007. The aim of the work is to provide a de-

scription of the “variegated terrain of high consequence decision making in complex institutional settings” by framing the discussion around an “organized anarchy” decision-making framework called the Garbage Can Decision-Making Model (GCDMM). This model stipulates that a decision “emerges from random interactions of problems, solutions, choice situations, and participants, rather than from intentions, plans, and consistent decisions.” Additional topics discussed include an abbreviated history of the practice of technology forecasting and an analysis of the explicit or implicit influence of forecasting on the decision-making process for construction of new library spaces.

The book consists of a short introduction followed by six chapters and a conclusion section. Supplemental materials are an addendum, bibliography, and index. The first chapter describes the history of technology within libraries and provides examples of technology forecasts of libraries from 1877 to the present. Numerous examples are shown where the technology of the day was integrated into library staff workflows and the user environment. Past and contemporary examples of technology forecasts are highlighted as poor predictors of future outcomes. Chapter 2 describes various decision-making models as applied to the academic environment. The anarchical decision model GCDMM is presented as a framework for understanding the institutional decision-making process of this study. The third chapter examines criticisms of technology forecasting from various perspectives, including psychological influences, methodological concerns, and within higher education settings such as academic libraries. The fourth chapter defines the research methods and variables that embody the participants in decision-making category. Variables examined include “asymmetrical influence,” or the fluidity of

influential power of individuals within a group decision-making process. Chapter five examines the flow and interaction of problems and solutions on decision-making participants, as well as the traits of each. The sixth chapter describes the evolution of decisions regarding library construction projects within the structure of the GCDMM. The conclusion section highlights variables of the GCDMM and also makes some general recommendations for best practices when involved in a decision-making body. In addition, an alternative framework called the ecological model is proposed as an improved metaphor for describing decision making. The addendum section discusses the research design of the study and includes subsections describing the method, research questions, data analysis, data quality, and limitations of the study.

This work offers some fascinating theoretical analysis and observations of the group decision-making process in the domain of contemporary university library construction projects. Examination of the history, flaws, and influence of technology forecasting in library construction projects will benefit most readers, especially decision makers. However, while the author goes to great lengths to explain the complexity of group dynamics in decision making, his concluding remarks are parsimonious in regard to practical application of his results. Those seeking overtly constructive recommendations or guidance through the often complex and exhaustive decision-making process of library construction projects may be disappointed. Though the mention of strategies and best practices is sparse, this work is recommended to individuals who are curious about the theoretical dynamics that influence decision making and to deans or directors of libraries who hope or plan to build a new library facility in the 21st century.—*Anders Selhorst, Guilford Technical Community College, Jamestown, North Carolina.*